

THE

Commonweal

Thirty Years of Salazar

Unique Among Modern Dictators

by **Francis E. McMahon**

Catholics and the Dialogue

Religion in a Free Society

by **James O'Gara**

PRIESTLEY'S WILDERNESS by Max Cosman

FICTION IN RUSSIA by Francis B. Randall

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THE CATHOLIC WORKER

May, 1958

25th Anniversary Issue

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The Catholic Worker

GRamercy 5-9180

223 Chrystie Street

New York 2, N.Y.

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THE COMMONWEAL
386 FOURTH AVENUE
NEW YORK 16

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Entered as second-class matter at the post office at Orange, Conn., under the act of March 3, 1879. Published weekly and printed in the U. S. A. by the Commonwealth Publishing Co., Inc., 386 Fourth Ave., New York 16, N.Y. MUrray Hill 3-9685.

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U. S. and Canada, \$8 a year. Foreign, \$10. Single copies 25¢

THE Commonweal

A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts

THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

— week by week —

PARTISAN POLITICS

THIS IS a journal of opinion; opinions are the editors' stock-in-trade. As we have often said before, we take it for granted that our readers have opinions too. Most of our readers probably are sympathetic to our general point of view, but we would be surprised if all of them agreed with us on every point. The letters we find hardest to answer, though, are those which say we are partisan in our comments on political questions. Let us try to give our thinking on this.

The first thing that should be said is that we are not personally interested in what people call partisan politics. We do not care whether the party in power in Washington is called Republican or Democratic or Mugwump. We get no favors from any political party, and we want none. At the same time, we do believe in certain political and social principles.

In foreign affairs, for example, we are what people call "internationalist." We favor the principles behind the United Nations; we believe in united action against Communist aggression; we want world cooperation in the battle against poverty—all of which positions, we believe, are in keeping with the best in Catholic social thought.

Furthermore, we are convinced that the chief political issue today is the struggle between the West and international Communism. To our mind, this far overshadows any domestic concern. Indeed, many domestic concerns are shaped and determined by this struggle—the fact that we are unable to spend as much as we would like in social welfare, for example, is due to the necessity for heavy defense spending.

These convictions on our part cannot be kept in a vacuum; we have to look for men in public life who will exemplify them in practice. We recognize that the application of principles to particular

questions is not easy, and that many people may disagree with our attempt, but we have to try. Life and human nature being what they are, the actual realization of these principles in national affairs will always be, at best, approximate. Yet we must make the attempt or these principles will remain lifeless, fit only for textbook discussions.

AT THIS POINT in our national history, therefore, we make no secret of our conviction that the nation and the free world are not getting from Washington the leadership that is needed. With a few obvious and honorable exceptions, we think this is true of both political parties. However, since the Republican Party is in command of the Executive branch, which bears major responsibility in the area of foreign policy, it is inevitable that our criticisms will bear most heavily on the Republicans.

What bothers us? The Latin American outbursts against Vice President Nixon and his wife provide a good example. The claim that good may yet come out of evil by forcing the United States to reconsider its Latin American policies does not alter the essential fact that the anti-Nixon rioting was a visible manifestation of the failure of U.S. policy in a key area of the world. More than a year ago this magazine ran an article on U.S. policy which spelled out what many editorialists are now saying in the light of the recent anti-U.S. rioting. Yet this magazine has no sources of information in Latin America beyond some contact with Christian Democrats and with a few priest friends who are engaged in missionary work there. Such sources obviously cannot be compared with those available to the State Department, the C.I.A., and other responsible agencies in Washington, so information which might have prevented the Nixon debacle was

surely available in Washington. What happened to it?

Who is doing the thinking in Washington—not just about today's problems but about the future? Who is judging disarmament proposals with an eye to the day when every small nation in the world may have the ability to wage H-bomb warfare? Who made the basic decisions that let the Russians achieve a massive two-year lead on us in missiles? Is anyone planning now to meet the explosion that seems inevitable in the Middle East, or will we be caught by surprise again, as we were in Latin America? What positive steps are being taken to hold together and strengthen the Western alliance? Have we thought through what our stand on Germany will be when Chancellor Adenauer is no longer in power? or on Formosa after Chiang Kai-shek is gone? Has Washington lost its power to generate new ideas and to arouse the people to the challenge that confronts us?

These are examples of the questions that bother us. It may be argued that we expect too much from our national government, or that no set of political leaders could do what we think needs to be done. But we do not believe it. We remain convinced that the United States could and should have more leadership than it is receiving. We could not care less whether this leadership comes from the Democrats or the Republicans or both, but we can criticize what we consider serious failures in U.S. policy only in terms of the men who now hold power. This fact probably makes the occasional charge of partisanship inevitable, but we see no way around that. If we said we thought everything was going as well as could be expected, we would be misleading our readers and betraying our own convictions.

A COUNSEL OF PATIENCE

AMONG THE THINGS President Eisenhower advocated in his generally encouraging talk to the conference of American Negro leaders in Washington were "patience and forbearance" in the matter of securing civil rights. These were the counsels played up in metropolitan newspapers and objected to by certain Negro spokesmen. As virtues they are estimable and, indeed, they are greatly to be desired in the analyses and working out of our racial problems. There are reasons, however, why such terms were hardly felicitous for the President to bring forward at this convening of an important Negro group. To what extent are these fellow-citizens called upon to manifest further pa-

tience in their efforts to secure full-fledged civil rights?

It is four years since the historic Supreme Court decision against segregated public schools. There has been some real progress toward integrated public education in the border states, but in the South itself only fifteen out of the 1,354 bi-racial school districts have ended segregation or even begun the desegregation process. Some cases are pending for the fall, but up to now all public schools in seven Southeastern states remain segregated. Moreover, the President's Civil Rights Commission, which was set up last September, has not yet met or acted, since confirmation of appointees has been held up in committee and members still lack Senatorial approval. Under such circumstances, is it any wonder that some American Negro leaders take umbrage at the President's counsel of patience before their group?

EMBATTLED LEBANON

OF ALL THE RECENT outbreaks of anti-Americanism few are more disheartening than the disorders in Lebanon, this country's firmest friend in the Arab Middle East. The American Embassy itself was a target of Lebanese mob violence, which included the burning of the United States Information Service libraries in Beirut and Tripoli. Yet Lebanon is a small land which has been receiving some ten million dollars in aid year by year. Americans naturally wonder what has gone wrong.

The regime of President Chamoun was the rioters' primary target, a government identified in the popular mind with unwavering friendship for the United States. The news that Chamoun supporters were seeking a constitutional amendment that would permit him to run for a second six-year term and the killing of a prominent anti-government journalist of leftist sympathies set things off. It was significant that the disorders were spurred on by broadcasts from Cairo and Damascus urging the overthrow of the Lebanese Government and the merging of Lebanon with the United Arab Republic.

The fact that Egyptian and Syrian agitators had much to do with the planning and staging of the demonstrations is widely recognized. Both men and arms which infiltrated from across the mountainous Syrian border have made things particularly difficult for a nation with an army of less than nine thousand and a police force of four thousand.

What further complicates matters is the religious issue deriving from the fact that Lebanese Moslems and Christians are about equal in numbers—although there is evidence that the Moslems are increasing the more rapidly of the two and that now they do constitute a clear majority of the population. Responsible elements in the country have constantly sought to avoid political cleavage between the two groups on religious lines. But the position of the Chamoun government is weakened at this crucial moment by the fact that its dominant Christian elements are all too readily identified with friendship for the West and, in Arab minds, with opposition to Nasser in particular and to the Moslem world in general.

By all accounts the American error was to expect that substantial and much needed aid would be sufficient to offset Communist, pan-Arab and neutralist pressures among peoples who are swept along by authentic desires to have their place in the reawakening Arab world. It appears now that the most that can be expected from American programs of trade and aid with Lebanon will be to strengthen the possibilities of its continued independence, as this advanced center of trade and culture rightfully has considerable national pride. The United States will, in fact, have to lower its sights because of recent developments. It is hard to see how Americans can any longer hope for anything beyond the continued independence and genuine neutrality of heavily threatened Lebanon.

MR. HUXLEY'S FEARS

WHEN SCIENTIFIC and technological discoveries make front page news and when the application of these discoveries to everyday life is an everyday affair, it is worth considering the opinions of a man whose imagination reached in this direction years ago. During a recent Mike Wallace T.V. interview, Mr. Aldous Huxley discussed the possible effects of some persuasive techniques that are as yet only partially developed and tested.

Mr. Huxley stressed the dangers of those technological and scientific advances which make it possible to affect with skill and deliberation a man's subconscious mind. Emphasizing that democracy depends upon the ability of each citizen to make free and rational decisions, he pointed out the increasing possibility that man's mind can be subjected to and overcome by drugs, certain mass media, subliminal advertising, etc. Used effectively,

these methods of persuasion might rob the society of autonomous individuals capable of making decisions of their own.

Of the various societies that have been imaginatively projected into the future, Huxley's *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *1984* are among the most successful. For a time it looked as if Orwell's *1984* was most telling in its incisive criticisms of the real possibilities, in its postulation of the kind of society that would be ruled from the top. Organized brutality seemed a more logical extension of modern trends than did the systematic, scientific destruction of individuality that was shown in *Brave New World*. But Mr. Huxley's emphasis upon modern techniques of persuasion—and the memory of modern trials in which men have spoken against themselves and their principles—is a reminder that his "brave new world" remains a horrible possibility.

PORTENTS AND SYMBOLS

THE RUSSIANS have thrust into outer space a ton-and-a-half satellite. This is sixteen times heavier than Sputnik II and one hundred times heavier than the largest of the American satellites. The technical achievement of the Russians was sufficient to start a host of rumors about what Sputnik III was devised to accomplish. The rumors proved to be largely unfounded and the large-scale accomplishments which they anticipated are still somewhere in the future. Nevertheless Russia's continued advances in developing outer-space vehicles are impressive.

The initial startling impact made by the first earth satellite has been thoroughly assimilated. So quickly do we accustom ourselves to the new that the launching of satellites is now something that we expect and take in our stride. And the early uneasiness and self-criticism in which Americans indulged themselves have given way to reappraisals and constructive suggestions. We have largely accepted the idea that in some important areas of scientific theory and achievement the Western world is no longer foremost. Our task now is to fulfill our best potentials.

It is a sign of our times that Sir Winston Churchill, long recognized as the carrier and the embodiment of large humane values central to Western thought and tradition, has started a campaign to create an elite college of science and technology at Cambridge University. Frankly stating that Britain has lost her former position of world

power, he said that "the future of Britain depends on the skill and craftsmanship with which we can meet the challenge of the new technological age." No sensible person could happily envisage a society composed primarily of scientists and technologists, and in the comments of those who early welcomed Sir Winston's proposal there was an occasional guarded note as if the writer were looking wistfully back to a simpler, happier time when the defense of society did not seem to depend so heavily upon scientific achievement.

But neither wistfulness nor nostalgia will properly build toward tomorrow. The satellites now circling the globe are both portents and symbols of the future. It is in recognition of this that Sir Winston made his apparently uncharacteristic proposal. But the proposal contains the large, difficult challenge Western society now faces. For this society must be able to see the value of the specialized studies Sir Winston advocates without losing or distorting those larger, more liberal values that produced Sir Winston himself.

OUR NEIGHBOR TO THE NORTH

IT NEVER rains but it pours, and the Senate inquiry into the anti-Nixon incidents in South America has brought attention to still another dangerous aspect of United States relations with its neighbors in the New World. Testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has brought out the unfortunate deterioration in recent years of our relations with Canada, where resentment of United States policies has produced a growing atmosphere of anti-U.S. feeling not unrelated to that which exploded into violence in Latin America.

The Canadian complaints are not new, but then neither are those of the Latin Americans. Heading the list of grounds for discontent are economic matters. Canadians are angered by the United States surplus wheat disposal program, which undercuts Canada's vital wheat exports, by threatened U.S. import quotas on lead, zinc and oil, by the uncertain extension by Congress of important Reciprocal Trade agreements.

There are other, smaller, points of friction: the ever-increasing power of United States investors over Canadian financial affairs, United States pressure on Canadian foreign trade policies, tax disputes, etc. But perhaps most offensive to Canadian national pride is the continued publication by the Senate Internal Security subcommittee of charges

of Communism against Canadian officials. The subcommittee has recently released testimony charging that Robert Bryce, secretary to the Canadian Cabinet, was a member of a Communist study group at Harvard in 1936, drawing immediate protest from Norman Robertson, Canadian Ambassador to the United States. Last year, it will be remembered, the Internal Security subcommittee published similar charges against Canadian diplomat E. Herbert Norman, who subsequently committed suicide. The new Canadian protest accuses the subcommittee of violating an agreement, made only last year, to keep testimony of this nature confidential.

There seems little likelihood that anti-United States feeling in Canada would ever reach the disastrous level it has in Latin America, but the time for concern and responsible action is obviously now, before the possibility of any such calamity. If we cannot afford to lose friends, it is equally true that we cannot afford to weaken the friendships we do enjoy. It is good that we are thinking through our relations with Latin America, but let us not neglect our ties with Canada, our all-important neighbor to the North.

ACID TEST

OUR DISTASTE for rock 'n' roll—or at least most of it—is as intense as anyone's, we suppose, and we sympathize with the feelings of anyone who denounces it. But, spoil-sport as it may seem, we think that even here it is necessary to move carefully, reasonably, fairly.

It is open season on the guitar-thumpers, apparently, and it seems that every other newspaper columnist has set himself up as a combined musicologist-sociologist-criminologist. After condemning rock 'n' roll as music, which is as may be, the pundits go on to attribute most of the world's ills to the new musical craze, and juvenile delinquency in particular. In Boston, for example, rock 'n' roll impresario Alan Freed is now under indictment, accused of inciting crime and violence through the sinister agency of rock 'n' roll music. His rock 'n' roll concerts, needless to say, have been banned for the future by Boston's city fathers.

To speak up for civil liberties even for a man who makes his living by inflicting those sounds on an already anguished world is an extreme thing, we know, but there seems to be no help for it. It hurts, all right, but we're on record: we believe in justice even when it hurts.

Thirty Years of Salazar

The theoretical basis of Portugal's present regime lies in Salazar's belief that "the people has less need of being sovereign than of being governed"

by FRANCIS E. McMAHON

THIRTY YEARS AGO Professor António de Oliveira Salazar of the University of Coimbra took charge of the destinies of Portugal. He had assumed power on his own terms, insisting upon complete authority to set in order the chaotic financial structure of the nation. Previously, and for almost two decades, Portugal had been in turmoil. An effete monarchy had been overthrown in 1910 and a republic proclaimed. The record of the republic for the next sixteen years was hardly a creditable one. With a few notable exceptions, its leaders were inspired by a spirit of Jacobinism, showing more talent for the uprooting of traditional institutions than for establishing an authentic democratic order. Governments rose and fell with astonishing frequency, and the financial life-blood of the nation was drained. The contending factions often resorted to violence, but a successful military coup in 1926 finally brought this epoch of Portuguese history to a close. Two years later, Professor Salazar was designated Minister of Finance. He became Prime Minister in 1932, and he has brought about in Portugal a form of stability and peace.

Salazar is unique among modern dictators. Austere and retiring, his character is in marked contrast to that of a Mussolini, a Hitler or a Perón. These latter strutted noisily on the world's stage. Salazar prefers to stand in the wings. Franco likewise is somewhat reserved, but the Spanish *Caudillo* craves the adulation of his people. Salazar is relatively indifferent to the plaudits of the masses. But he could not have ruled as long as he has without an iron will and a clearly conceived purpose. He has sought to mold Portugal according to a political and social ideal of clearly defined features.

It has been said that Salazar's chief inspiration is derived from the encyclical writings of Popes Leo XIII

and Pius XI. Unquestionably he has been influenced by the encyclicals, but it is highly doubtful whether such influence has been decisive. Salazar has not shown the least disposition to put into effect—or to begin to put into effect—the ideas of the 1944 Christmas message of Pope Pius XII on Christian Democracy. He is authoritarian by temperament and conviction. The theoretical basis of the present regime lies in his belief that “the people has less need of being sovereign than of being governed.” The influence of Charles Maurras and *L'Action Française* is evident here. Maurras and his movement enjoyed much prestige in conservative Catholic Portuguese circles prior to the revolt of 1926. *L'Action Française* had for its aim the destruction of every idea and institution that stemmed from the French Revolution and the establishment of an order reflecting nationalistic and religious traditions. It is impossible to understand the Portugal of Salazar without taking this movement into account.

FISCAL MATTERS constituted the most acute problem facing Portugal in 1928. Inefficiency and waste under the republic had undermined the financial structure of the country. Salazar addressed himself to the problem with vigor and dispatch. Political stability, he was convinced, was dependent upon a sound economic and financial policy. He achieved extraordinary results, despite the poor resources of the country. Instead of chronic and alarming deficits, he produced over the years a series of budgetary surpluses. Taxes were raised and expenditures reduced. He eliminated the country's foreign indebtedness, and restored its international credit. The national currency was placed upon a sound basis.

But fiscal problems were merely Salazar's initial concern. He had a greater dream: the establishment of a corporative social and economic order. The scheme

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provided for the organization of all the economic and cultural interests of the country into various corporations, each enjoying all autonomy compatible with the general welfare. A national Corporative Chamber, representative of all groups, would act in an advisory capacity to the government.

The plan has been exceedingly slow of realization. For a generation Portugal continued to be a corporative state without corporations. The zeal of Salazar himself was countered by general inertia. An over-all Corporative Chamber was in fact established, but it was more of a governmental organ than the embodiment of autonomous social and economic groups. Finally, in 1957, four corporations were set up, embracing agriculture, transport, insurance and fisheries. Separate workers' and employers' organizations were integrated to form the individual corporations. It remains to be seen how effective they will be in improving the economic lot of the Portuguese people, whose standard of living continues to be the lowest of Western Europe. There is a more basic problem also: to what extent will these corporations flourish as self-governing units under a regime that regards the people as incapable of political self-government?

SALAZAR lacks completely any sympathy for political democracy. He seems incapable of distinguishing between the Jacobin, totalitarian democracy of the days of the republic and the more authentic forms of Christian inspiration. In the 1930's he was predicting that parliamentary democracy everywhere would soon be a thing of the past. In recent years, however, opponents of his regime have been permitted for a brief period to campaign prior to the election of representatives to the National Assembly. The Assembly itself has little power of initiative and little authority. But the limited freedom accorded to the opposition has seen the emergence of Republicans, Monarchists and Christian Democrats. The Communists are active in the underground. Salazar's own political grouping, the National Union, invariably triumphs at the polls. In the absence of authentic political freedom, no conclusions can be drawn from these victories about Salazar's popularity. Unquestionably, however, he enjoys considerable support. His is a comparatively mild dictatorship. Yet dictatorship it is, with some of the trappings of classical Fascism: a secret police, a controlled press, a youth movement, and a concentration camp for political prisoners.

Nothing, however, could be wider of the mark than to stigmatize present-day Portugal as a "clerical state." Harmony exists between Church and State, but each leads its independent life. During the republican period the Church had sustained a severe persecution at the hands of the Jacobin and the Masonic leaders of the regime. These men construed separation of Church

and State to mean the throttling of the former by the latter. Under Salazar the principle of separation obtains, but it is now conceived in a spirit of friendship and limited cooperation.

The Church receives no financial support from the state, save with respect to missionary work in the colonial territories. Dissident religious groups are accorded full freedom in the homeland. None of this means that the state is religiously neutral. It professes to be guided by Christian principle, and it includes religious instruction in the schools. The Concordat of 1940, which sanctions the present relations between Church and State, embodies certain principles which may have universal validity for the modern world.

Credit for the sensible relations between Church and State is due not only to Salazar. No less responsible is the Patriarch of Lisbon, Manuel Gonçalves Cerejeira. Cardinal Cerejeira is one of the most remarkable personalities in the Church today. A foe at once of Jacobinism and of totalitarianism, he works unceasingly to revitalize Catholic life in Portugal, despite such severe handicaps as the lack of adequate numbers of clergy. He and his fellow bishops have shown a proper reserve about the present regime, though their attitude is not unfriendly. In an address some months ago the Cardinal made it clear that "the hierarchy in Portugal never gave an official opinion on the political regime as such. It has neither approved it nor condemned it. Yet it esteems the present system and respects it." As for totalitarianism, he declared that "the Totalitarian State would like to destroy the Church, even though at the same time it loads it with honors. If it were of a clerical turn of mind, it would willingly make the dignitaries of the Church the chaplains of the regime." The Church is poor in Portugal, but eminently free.

There is a potential source of friction between Portugal and the Holy See regarding the role of the missionary in the overseas possessions. It has been the long-time policy of Rome to divorce missionary activity from nationalistic propaganda. The Portuguese viewpoint has been, however, that the task of the missionary is not only to spread the Christian Faith but also to promote Portuguese civilization. Portugal accordingly subsidizes the work of the missions abroad. No major controversy has developed on this issue. But conflict can emerge as the worldwide tide of anti-colonialism grows and as subject nations clamor increasingly for independence. As one of the largest colonial empires in the world, Portugal will some day be faced with a many-dimensional crisis. The religious difficulties will be minor; of major proportions will be the political.

PORTUGAL'S two largest overseas possessions, those of Angola and Mozambique in south central Africa, have not yet seriously felt the impact of the

nationalistic tide swirling about this continent. It is only a question of time, however, when these immense areas, with their millions of people, will feel the impact. The ferment for independence gathers increased strength and intensity. How does Portugal confront this awakening of Africa? It is not only reluctant to acknowledge the facts, but it refuses to see what relevance the changes have to Angola and Mozambique. Its policy is not to prepare these areas for ultimate independence, but to fashion them into integral parts of the Portuguese nation.

Officially, the African possessions are "provinces" of Portugal. The professed goal is to prepare the inhabitants, through a process of "assimilation," for full participation in the rights and privileges of Portuguese citizenship. To that end, Portugal is attempting to develop the resources of the regions and to expand the educational facilities. The progress, however, is agonizingly slow. The vast majority of the indigenous population is still not "assimilated." Physical development is handicapped by lack of capital. Given another century or so, Portugal might achieve its dream of transforming these areas into thoroughly integrated Portuguese provinces. But this can be no more than a dream. The slow rate of progress is wholly out of tune with the exigencies of the hour. And the progress that is being made is in a direction that will not satisfy nationalistic aspirations.

The balance sheet of Portuguese colonialism reveals positive and negative features. It is to the eternal credit of the Portuguese that they are largely devoid of a sense of racial discrimination. They have difficulty in comprehending why the color of a man's skin should make any difference in social relations. Among the few score thousand of the "assimilated" in Angola and Mozambique, a minority have posts of responsibility in the government. On the debit side Portugal still enforces a policy of limited forced-labor. Natives continue to be drafted for work on governmental projects. And, as recently as a few years ago, native workers were periodically forced into the service of Portuguese private entrepreneurs.

Portugal is resolved to abandon none of its territories. Its firmness was demonstrated in the conflict with India over the question of Goa. In a rather high-handed fashion, Prime Minister Nehru called upon Portugal to relinquish control of this relatively small bit of territory on the Indian sub-continent. When Portugal refused to bow, protest marches into Goa were organized. These were followed by trade boycotts and the seizure of minute enclaves belonging to Portugal. Portugal has been in Goa for over four hundred years, and it would be ridiculous to say its rule has been harsh. But India demands that the last vestige of "oppressive" colonialism be eliminated from its territory. The Portuguese retort that the province

of Goa is as integral a part of their nation as a suburb of Lisbon. A somewhat strident Indian nationalism challenges the claims of an historical empire. The issue is still unresolved.

PORTUGAL MAY have its troubles with India, but it enjoys a high degree of prestige with the United States and with most of the Western European powers. It is a full-fledged partner of the North Atlantic Pact. In exchange for American airbases on its metropolitan territory, it has obtained economic and military aid. It was neutral during World War II, though under pressure from the Allies it made available facilities on the Azores for the offensive against the Nazis. Despite his authoritarian outlook, Salazar showed much more reserve towards the cause of the Nazis than did his fellow-dictator in Spain. It is doubtful whether he ever had any sympathy for the basic ideals of Hitler. Franco had compromised himself badly during the war years, but Salazar was more discreet. Portugal's historic ties with Great Britain were an important factor in keeping Portugal out of the Nazi orbit.

Relations with Franco Spain itself have been of the most cordial character. During the Spanish Civil War, Salazar made clear where his sympathies lay. Not only did his propaganda favor the Nationalists, but he extended every possible aid to their cause. Spanish Republicans—including Christian Democratic Basques—still find it hard to forgive him for turning over to the enemy Republican combatants who had fled for safety across the border. Many of these men were later summarily executed.

The years are creeping up on Salazar. The question of a successor has not been resolved. The problem is in some respects less favorable than in Spain. In Spain, at least, some degree—however slight—of continuity is assured through the agency of a monarchy. But monarchical sentiment in Portugal is at a far lower ebb; its reigning House came to an inglorious end in 1910. An Irish Dominican, resident for many years in Portugal, was asked about the future of the nation. He replied that the Virgin of Fatima will protect Portugal. Perhaps. But surely supernatural hope was not meant to supplant the quest for political solutions.

One trouble with modern dictators is that their final legacy is generally a political vacuum. Despite some creditable achievements, Salazar appears destined to leave such a bequest. Thirty years of rule certainly was sufficient time for laying the foundations of a genuine Christian Democratic order. With such an order established, the future of Portugal would be far less uncertain. As things are, a price must be paid for commitment to a defective political ideology. The fog of *L'Action Française* has clouded the horizons of the Portugal of tomorrow.

PUT OUT NO FLAGS

WE HEAR so much about the difficulties of pluralism these days that we probably tend to forget what a miracle it is that, by and large, we do live in peace with one another. I have often thought that if you took a group of ancient philosophers or medieval schoolmen and projected the U.S. of the mid-twentieth century as a possibility, they would all agree that it could never work because the principle of unity would be too slight to keep a political society afloat. I feel reasonably sure that they would deny that a society which is divided on all the questions that really matter could be held together. But here we are—a relatively cohesive nation and one as stable as any in the world today.

I am convinced that we are stable only because we live without ideology. "What," Chief Justice Warren asked last summer, "is Americanism?" So far, I am delighted to say, no persuasive answers have been forthcoming. Ask a question like that and you may hear about apple pie, Fourth of July parades, or our sacred right to boo the Dodgers; or you may hear what Americanism is not—it is not Communism, fascism or socialism; or you may hear from a thousand different voices that Americanism means this, that or the other thing. But the voices are shouting such different answers it quickly becomes clear that whatever Americanism is, it is not a set of simple propositions, universally held, about the meaning of life or indeed the meaning of any of the really important questions about man and his destiny.

How long can we go along this way, especially in an age of ideology like this one? This is the question that bothers many of our best thinkers. Can we survive without putting much more emphasis than we have been putting on substantial beliefs? I think we can. Still, I see the arguments on the other side.

The religious-minded, for instance, recall the opening words of the Declaration of Independence. This at least, they say, all Americans should agree on, namely that there is a God, the ultimate source of our rights against the State, and we are politically equal only because we are all His children. Without that minimum, the religious-minded say, what claim can the citizen make against the State, what security does he have against the atheistic ideologue? In the realm of logic, these arguments are unanswerable, I am convinced. But I am equally convinced that in the long run it is not logic but historical experience which secures America's liberties.

That is the answer I would have to give the man who asks what we can hope for without some officially accepted basic theological underpinning for our rights.

It is also the answer I would have to give to the man who is nervous about the Catholic minority's becoming a majority. The naked logic of Catholic theology might justify the destruction of richly prized civil rights; but I am sure the experience of American history has now triumphed over that logic as surely as the same experience has triumphed over the logic of Protestant intolerance.

I for one would feel safe in any America of the foreseeable or conceivable future as long as the nation as a whole scorns ideology. I know that the logic of the secularist and non-believer if pressed to its limits could end up in Jacobin tyranny. I know that the logic of Catholic theology if pressed to its limits could end up in religious intolerance. I know that the logic of Protestant puritanism might reestablish the nativist bigotry that has already stained our history. I know that the logic of Orthodox Judaism, if carried to its ultimate application, might lead to theocratic pretensions. If I thought that logic alone determined the future of America, I would be nervous no matter which group was in the majority.

But I am persuaded that tolerance has been learned by the American people and it has been learned not in a logic class but in the laboratory of experience.

Our problem now is not the logic of religious or philosophical ideologies, whatever they might be; our problem is the chop-logic of those hardy Americanists who, coming in many garbs, seem willing, even eager, to stamp their bastard ideology with the Seal of the United States. The Americanist's mistake, I think, is that he is so anxious to turn our procedural techniques into substantive propositions that he stands in danger of creating an ideological monster that can satisfy no one, not even himself.

What a hodgepodge he produces, for instance, when he interprets freedom of speech as philosophical relativism, as he does, or freedom of religion as Protestant free-church theology, or the "limited government" concept of civil liberty as moral indifferentism—to cite only three examples. How blithely he thereby excommunicates great chunks of the nation from the company of patriotic Americans.

I would find any ideological conception of the American political system repellent. Most repellent of all, I think, is the hopeless hodgepodge of the Americanist. It has neither logic nor reason to justify it. It can end up by manifesting the worst aspects of the known ideologies without producing the virtues of any of them. Beware the ideologue draped in the American flag. He may be the most dangerous of them all.

JOHN COGLEY.

Catholics and the Dialogue

by JAMES O'GARA

WRITING IN THESE pages some years ago, a great American Protestant spokesman, Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, said: "I am not anxious to apportion degrees of blame for a deplorable situation for which the blame must probably be divided fairly evenly; but the relations between Catholics and Protestants in this country are a scandal and an offense against Christian charity."

Elsewhere a great European Catholic theologian, Father Karl Adam, wrote: "'See how they love one another!' said the pagans of the first Christian centuries, when they beheld the loving unity of the early Christians. 'See how little they love one another!' the modern pagans might and must say mockingly as they become more and more conscious of the many deep divisions among Christians."

I agree with both statements. That is why I think the recent week-long seminar on Religion in a Free Society, sponsored by the Fund for the Republic and organized by John Cogley, was so important. I am happy to have participated in what I think may well have been an historic occasion. For what took place during that week was an example of the kind of serious dialogue that could be going on between Protestants and Catholics and between Christians and Jews. And I can think of few things that would serve religion and the free society better.

Participants in the seminar came from all over the United States. The conference included priests and professors, ministers and mendicants, rabbis and agnostics—everything from seminary professors and semi-cloistered nuns to experts on questions of Constitutional law and public school supervisors. All in all, the gathering probably represented as much of a cross-section of American belief as you could assemble—Catholics, Protestants of various denominations, Jews, and what were called secular humanists. (Among those present, incidentally, was Paul Blanshard, for whom Catholics seemed to have a sneaking sort of fondness and to whom they loved to introduce themselves—largely, I suspect, so they could later say, "I met Paul Blanshard, you know, and he's really a pleasant sort of fellow!")

We who were there did not begin by loving each

other, certainly, and I am not even sure that we ended that way. But something happened, I know that. What did we discuss? Good, solid topics, like Religious Pluralism and Civic Unity; the Meaning of Separation of Church and State; Religion and Education; Religion and Secular Culture; Religion and the Free Society. And in the course of the week we listened to a lot of papers which will later be published. The word "paper" has a dull sound to it, I know. With almost no exceptions, though, these were not; they were magnificent. After all, how often does one get a chance to hear Robert Maynard Hutchins or Father John Courtney Murray? Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel or Father Walter J. Ong? Leo Pfeffer or Dr. Paul Tillich? Will Herberg, Stringfellow Barr or Father Gustave Weigel? Almost any one of these men would make any conference a success. Taken together, their cumulative effect was tremendous.

GOOD AS the papers were, though, they were only part of the conference. We discussed and discussed, early and late, formally in the meeting room and informally in the halls and over the dinner table. And gradually something important began to happen.

The seminar started out like many others at which Americans gather to discuss public issues that touch on religion. On the surface there was gentility, politeness, civilization. Beneath, there was suspicion, hostility, aggression. By the end of the second day the veneer started to crack. All the participants in the seminar began to forget their reserve, and non-Catholics to express something of their deepest feelings about Catholics. These went far beyond any question about bus rides or free lunches for parochial school children. What they were really worried about was what they would term—offensively to Catholic ears, of course—"the Catholic problem."

The non-Catholics at the conference wanted answers to questions that were not on the agenda. Do Catholics in the United States believe in the equality of all religions before the law or not? If Catholics achieve a majority in the United States, will they throw out the Constitution and give Catholicism a preferred position? Do Catholics believe in democracy or do they just accept it as a necessary expedient at the moment?

A good many Catholics bitterly resented this turn of

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events. Even to raise such questions, they felt, was an insult. And in a way, certainly, they were right. Yet the fears expressed by Protestants were real, and something had to be done about them if the conference was to get anywhere at all. It is impossible, for example, to try to argue that Catholics might have a claim in justice for aid or tax-relief in connection with parochial schools, if one's hearers see these schools as steps toward subversion of the Constitution. The third night, therefore, a completely unofficial meeting was held to bring out in the open and deal with what had only been hinted at before.

I attended that meeting, and I was shocked at the hostility displayed by some members of each group. Harsh things were said, and I feared the wounds made that night would be a long time in healing. The whole idea, I became convinced, was a mistake, since each group included men who seemed more anxious for a fight than for understanding.

I was never more wrong. The next morning it became clear that a strange and paradoxical thing had happened. Somehow or other, what had been an acrimonious debate had been transformed into a Protestant-Catholic conversation. The differences between us were still real enough, and they would not be easily resolved, but on each side men were recognizing those who spoke with truly Christian accents. The miracle was that across centuries of misunderstanding and suspicion Christian spirit spoke to Christian spirit.

This was a great thing, filled with hope for the future. There were still men who seemed not to listen but only to wait for their chance to argue; there were still men inflamed by the spirit of partisanship. But somehow their voices had become almost irrelevant, and I think this fact became increasingly obvious even to themselves. At last, even if for a short time, Catholic Christians and Protestant Christians were speaking to each other across the chasm. For me it was a memorable and profoundly moving experience, and in this I know I was not alone.

What of the Jews during all this? I am inclined to think that during the first three days many of them were dissatisfied with the way the conference was going. Most of the participants from the Jewish community were concerned with practical problems of immediate and quite legitimate concern to them, such as community tensions and the use of Christian hymns and prayers in some public schools. The seminar never did grapple successfully with questions like these, not from any lack of interest or good will but simply because discussions rapidly sought another and higher level. If I am right in thinking the Jews were disappointed, though, that feeling should have been dissipated by Rabbi Heschel's talk on the last day. After hearing his paper on the God of Abraham and the prophets, every Christian in the room must surely have said in his

heart: "This is part of my heritage. I too am a child of Abraham and in some way a Jew." Thus a note was contributed by the Jews that was particularly their own, and another dimension had been added to the dialogue.

FOR THE accomplishments of the seminar to have a lasting effect, Catholics, Protestants and Jews must examine their own collective consciences in the light of the week's proceedings. If I were a Jew, for example, I would be raising these questions: how can concentration on the immediate and practical interests of the Jewish community reflect the diversity that exists among Jews? How can we bring the riches of the Jewish tradition to America? And I think I would end with the conviction that one talk by a Rabbi Heschel was worth a hundred discussions of community tensions.

If I were a Protestant, I would ask myself: are we seriously underestimating the spiritual depth and complexity of the Catholic Church? Do we tend too easily to identify the Catholic Church with Spanish Catholicism? Are we really satisfied with present efforts to provide religious education? Is there a genuine danger that present trends can make secularism the American religion? Do we unconsciously identify Protestantism with Americanism, creating in effect an American theological doctrine to which none but Protestants can in conscience subscribe?

These are questions addressed to Protestants and Jews which only they can discuss and answer. And they will, I feel sure, have many more which have not occurred to me. As far as Catholics are concerned, what can we learn from the experience of this seminar? The central lesson, I think, involves the way the Church looks to those who are not Catholics, for this image is clearly a distorted and frightening one—so much so that no one who sees the Church in this way could feel anything but dread.

If one judges from this seminar, what do many non-Catholics see? They see not the Church of Christ that Catholics behold but a huge monolithic structure, a kind of vast pressure group, intent on restricting here, banning there and picketing everywhere. Catholics are not, of course, completely to blame for this distortion of the Church that takes place in the public eye. We suffer from a heritage of centuries of mistrust and enmity. But Catholics often help to perpetuate this distorted image.

IF CATHOLICS are to speak to the modern world, we have to be prepared to listen as well as to talk. The crisis of this age is one of freedom. How do many Catholics respond to this fact? They say error has no rights, but what does this mean? They say liberty is not license, but who believes that it is, out-

side of textbooks? And is not the distinction often used simply to mean that Protestants and Jews ought to let us have our own way in civil society? It is no wonder such slogans have largely lost whatever value they once had.

I know as well as the next man that there are real anti-Catholics around, many of them. Nothing Catholics could do would satisfy them, and no Catholic statements on freedom would influence them. But for every bigot in America there is at least one man of good will. We must think of that man. What is a Catholic to say to such a man when he quotes, as one man did at this seminar, *Catholic Principles of Politics*, published in 1940 and written by two priests, John A. Ryan and Francis J. Boland, to the effect that if the United States ever becomes a Catholic State in which Protestants were numerically insignificant, their activities would be restricted and even their tax-exemption taken away? Does anyone seriously imagine that Protestants and Jews can find much comfort in the statement that such a mathematical contingency is highly unlikely, at least in the near future?

Certain things can and should be said to non-Catholic Americans on this score, of course, and many of them were said during this conference. It is a fact that the American Bishops have taken notice of such worries. In 1948, speaking for all the Bishops, Archbishop McNicholas explicitly reaffirmed the fact that American Catholics accept and support the American Constitution, including the First Amendment. I take this as a binding moral commitment, and I am sure other American Catholics do too. It is also a fact that Catholic loyalty has been constant and unswerving since the foundation of this Republic, and this

should count for a great deal. Then, too, I know that what Protestants call the classic Catholic thesis on Church and State is not nearly as simple as they think it is. And I am also aware that American Protestants fail to appreciate the extent to which the American experiment is unique and to understand that the traditional Catholic statements on democracy must be viewed in the historical context of European anti-clerical Jacobinism. But Protestants obviously need and would like to have more assurance and enlightenment on this score than they have yet received. Who will supply it if Catholics do not?

When the subject of democracy and freedom arises at these affairs, as it always does, it is good to be able to cite the work of men like Fathers John Courtney Murray and Gustave Weigel. I would suggest, though, that such discussions would be a great deal easier if this list could be extended considerably. The plain fact is, I think, that Catholics are not thinking enough or saying enough about freedom in the light of the American experience, and we might as well face up to it.

A dialogue between religious men on the problems of a free society is possible. If I needed any proof of this, the seminar supplied it. And Catholics can participate in such a dialogue, to the benefit of religion and the free society. But such seminars will bear fruit only to the extent that each group faces its own unresolved problems.

For Catholics, surely, one of these problems is the whole complex of questions surrounding the concept of freedom. There is no point in becoming indignant when the issue is raised. On this score we have neglected our responsibilities, and it is time to do something about it.

INEVITABLE CONFLICT?

God and Caesar in Italy

by GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN

CONFLICTS with the Vatican have been reported in Italy again and again during the last few months. Sometimes it has been a conflict between Church and State, as in the now famous case of the Bishop of Prato, who was condemned by a civil court for having publicly branded as concubines a former Catholic turned Communist and his Catholic wife who had married in the town hall and not in

church. The Vatican's strong reaction to the Bishop's condemnation is well known. Also widely publicized was the Vatican's strong stand against writings by Roger Peyrefitte, a Frenchman, who seems to specialize in Vatican affairs. Most of the cases, however, seem to be taken out of Giovanni Guareschi's best selling novel *Don Camillo*, which concerns the fighting priest and his bitter enemy the Communist Lord Mayor Peppone. The atmosphere is getting more and more heated because of the forthcoming elections, and both sides show

Mr. Kumlien, The Commonwealth's correspondent in Rome, writes regularly on Italian affairs.

a characteristic oversensitiveness. Some of the cases have hardly greater proportions than village scandals, yet they regularly echo all over Italy and frequently outside the country.

Many Italians have recently had the impression of being transported back to the Rome of more than eighty years ago, when the Italian troops conquered the city and deprived Pius IX of his temporal power. Old people can still recall the tense atmosphere and the heated arguments on both sides. For them these new conflicts sound like an echo of the past borne on familiar words and accents.

How is it possible for a conflict to develop between a State represented by the Christian Democratic government and the Church? The Christian Democratic government, everyone agrees, has been anxious not to displease the Vatican since it came into power twelve years ago. Yet during a short dramatic moment which followed the condemnation of the Bishop of Prato, there arose a conflict between them. Many people felt that if it had been pushed to its extreme consequences and had not been smoothed over from both sides, it might have imperiled the very existence of the party. But most Italians still have the impression that the issue has only been postponed. It touched something deep and essential and has stirred half-forgotten memories.

Italians undoubtedly have a longer, closer and more continuous experience of the relations between Church and State than any other Catholic nation, largely for geographic reasons, for the Church has had its seat in their country over the centuries. The Italians, therefore, have an historical sense, particularly in Rome itself, which could be summed up thus: we have been through all this before! We have heard these arguments before, expressed by other people at different times and in different terms, but the essence remains the same.

FOR THESE people, of all classes, it should be emphasized, who are attached to their Church as something natural and are Italians without patriotic overtones, the unreserved support which the Vatican gave to the Bishop of Prato was neither medieval nor excessive; for them it could not have been otherwise. At the same time they usually approve of the judges in Florence who condemned him. They don't see a contradiction in this. For them the case of Prato is a typical border incident between two powers, God and Caesar, who have always been and will always be in opposition to each other. This opposition is not felt as something detrimental, but as something normal and even healthy for both sides. Any concordat or treaty between the two will be, at best, an uneasy compromise. They feel this opposition as natural as, *mutatis mutandis*, the natural tension between or-

ganized capital and organized labor. The goal toward which one strives is to see that this natural opposition does not degenerate into open conflict.

Eighty-eight years ago the relations between the two powers were tense, for the Vatican had accumulated an amount of temporal power which was not good for it. Every Italian knows that no one now in the Vatican would deny this, and that it is frequently said that what the Vatican lost in temporal power it gained in spiritual power. Eighty-eight years ago it was deprived of temporal power by King Victor Emanuel II, supported by the majority of the Italian people. But the people did not therefore cease to be Catholics by any means, even when they fought against the troops of the Pope.

This instinctive sense for historical proportions, formed through hereditary experience, as it were, goes even further back. Most Italians have a working knowledge of Dante, even if they have only an elementary school background, and the centuries long conflict between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines of medieval Italy is quite familiar to them. They know that the Guelphs supported the Pope and that the Ghibellines fought him frequently enough with arms, but did not therefore cease proudly to acknowledge themselves Catholics. Dante himself, so often quoted by Italian priests for his deep theological insight, was not particularly tender with the Guelphs and placed many of them in the Inferno.

This strange and specifically Italian attitude could be summed up thus: it is the duty of the human representatives of the Church to fight for what they consider to be God's. It is the duty of the State to fight for what its representatives consider to be Caesar's. It is a borderline which is ever fluctuating and only God knows exactly where it runs in each century. It is the opposition between them which is normal, not peace. If there is too long a lull it may mean either that the Church is encroaching upon what belongs to Caesar—the Papal States, for example—or that Caesar is encroaching upon what belongs to God—as in the Communist countries. Both excesses are equally evil for the Church. The conclusion is that if recent arguments and conflicts recall what happened eighty-eight years ago, it must mean that there is one side extending its power unduly. And many Italian Catholics see this danger in the success of the Christian Democratic Party.

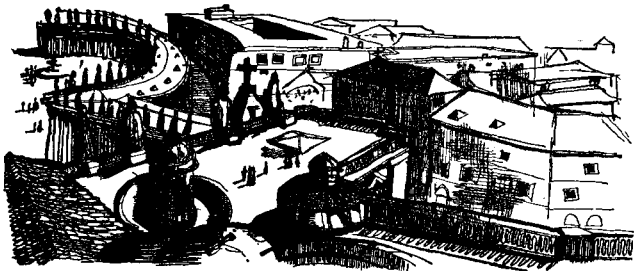
THE FOLLOWING true account of a non-Italian Catholic writer may further illustrate the prevalent Italian attitude. A Catholic writer who no longer practiced his faith visited Rome for the first time. At the station he took a taxi and began to talk with the driver in his halting Italian. As many Italians do, the driver harangued about the difficult times and naturally

against "the black government" and "the priests." The writer nodded and asked him whether he was a Catholic. The driver looked surprised at this strange foreigner and replied "naturally." He then resumed his shouting against "the priests." This simple fact so struck the writer that he asked the driver to take him straight to Saint Peter's, where he confessed himself devoutly for the first time in twenty years.

The expressions "clerical" and "anticlerical" assume a very special meaning in Italy. The Catholic anticlerical is by no means a paradox and has existed ever since the Ghibellines. He is quite different from the antireligious anticlerical, usually a fanatic, who is more frequent in France than in Italy, where millions of people who consistently vote Communist or regard themselves as Communists stick to their religion in spite of all. In some parts of the country, these Italians even threaten to beat up the priest who would dare to refuse them the sacraments. There are even anticlerical priests and religious in Italy, and their attitudes are not secret from anybody. They are not suspended by their superiors, and some of them do magnificent work where other priests would not be listened to.

There is another strange kind too in Italy today, and that is the non-believer who is pro-clerical. He is one of a species which dies out as soon as the State seriously encroaches upon what belongs to the Church, but which proliferates in proportion to the growth of the Church's temporal power. It is a truly devilish species, for the harm it does to the Church is beyond calculation. Among the Guelphs there were many, and also in the Papal States. Now they have appeared again in Italy and some of them are very influential. It happens that they are quite frank about their attitude and make heavy jokes about it. Among them are stout defenders of the Bishop of Prato and for them the reaction of the Vatican was not severe enough.

The well-known Italian Catholic writer Arturo Jemolo mentions them in his comment on the case of Prato: "Beware of those who are with you now . . . and who will be with you the day of the elections. I know many of them . . . have not been to Mass during the last forty years and they justify themselves by saying that the Church has no spiritual mission any more, but is useful as a great conservative power from a social point of view. Beware of these blasphemers more than of anything else. . . ."



THE SCREEN

BABBLING IN BABEL

THE FACT THAT "This Angry Age" is an international film could not automatically make it a good film. But neither does this fact account for its being such a bad film. Photographed in Technicolor in Thailand and Bangkok, it has an Italian producer (Dino De Laurentiis) a French director (Rene Clement), French and American scriptwriters (Clement and Irwin Shaw) and a cast from several countries who work hard to project the various characters from Marguerite Duras' novel *The Sea Wall*. The sea wall, made only of palm logs and dirt, is constructed with great effort by a widow and her son and daughter and some natives on the coast of French Indochina. Just as this sea wall collapses in a storm and allows the sea water to ruin the rich rice fields, so does the demoralized family fall apart under pressure.

Individually the performances are interesting. Jo Van Fleet makes the widow a strong-minded but unwise mother who is determined that her children will want what she wants. Anthony Perkins and Silvana Mangano play the son and daughter as a scatter-brained pair who are mainly interested in each other, dancing to hot rock-and-roll records, and escaping from mama's tough regime. The son scurries off to the city first and falls, quite willingly, into the clutches of a middle-aged trollop (Alida Valli). The daughter, accompanied by mama, follows and soon goes chasing after a government employee (Richard Conte) who has problems of his own. She then offers herself to a neurotic weakling (Nehemiah Persoff). Obviously the widow did not instruct her children very well. And just as obviously the makers of "This Angry Age" did not construct their film very well. I suspect they took a lot of footage in the Orient and then pieced it together as best they could when they got back to Rome. All of this is unfortunate; the film displays a great deal less talent than went into it.

ALSO ABOUT the disintegration of a family is "Hot Spell," a movie specially designed for people who like to suffer in the theater. "Hot Spell" never decides whether it is a high-class soap opera or a realistic study along the lines of "Death of a Salesman."

Hal B. Wallis gave this picture an excellent production; and Director Daniel Mann got from his fine cast a series of superb performances. Shirley Booth, still longing for the past, is first-rate as the plump, vaguely unhappy wife and mother who knows her husband is losing interest. Equally effective is Anthony Quinn as the stubborn, self-centered husband and father who,

worried about his middle age and home ties, feels he owes himself a last fling. Neither parent understands the children too well: Earl Holliman as the elder son, frustrated at home because he's too much like the papa who makes fun of him; Shirley MacLaine as the daughter who sees what's happening between mama and papa, and is afraid of love; Clint Kimbrough as the sensitive younger son who hates all this bickering at home.

James Poe's script gives us one disturbing scene after the other as the hot summer wears on and events mount to a tense climax. Some of the episodes are pathetic, some bitter, some funny. Director Daniel Mann has handled them all well, especially the one in which a neighbor (Eileen Heckart) tries to wise mama up and teach her to smoke; or when papa tries to win the young son's affection and explain what he wants in life; or when the husband and wife finally face the truth about his affair with another woman.

MOVIEGOERS who want more laughs with their writhing should enjoy "The High Cost of Loving." Although this husband-and-wife comedy is also strong on realism, it has a lot of amusing satire and pleasantry to make it entertaining. Jose Ferrer, who directed the film, plays the husband who thinks he has cause to worry about losing his job. This husband is no youngster; he frets and fumes so much that he fails to be elated about his wife's pregnancy. Gena Rowlands is charming as the wife who is excited and happy about the coming baby—after nine years of marriage—and doesn't understand hubby's concern over office events. The picture is longer than necessary, but it is very well acted (with nice touches added by Joanne Gilbert, Bobby Troup and Jim Backus in the good supporting cast) and its problems are close enough to everyman's to bring audiences into the scene. "The High Cost of Loving" is the kind of adult comedy that theatrical movies do too seldom now that TV covers the field so well—and so often.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

THE STAGE

AN INFERNAL HARMONY

THE CHARISMATIC intensity of Mr. Tennessee Williams' new play—its levy, as it were, on our most rigorous moral poise, not to speak of conceptions of the possible—must not be allowed to impair one's sense of "Suddenly Last Summer" as a singular document of Mr. Williams' maturity. Nor is it a reservation of this praise to concur in the opinion which holds the new work—the dominating

half of "Garden District"—to spring out of a general concept rather than any pressure of insistent experience. The actualities of "Suddenly Last Summer"—diabolically exact rhythms of Southern speech, motifs of family greed, intermittent flashes of portraiture (Miss Foxhill)—are rendered by Mr. Williams with that quick incisiveness we have come casually to acknowledge. Yet there are failures, of thinness as well as deliberate evasion: the strident jungle overtones are indulgently reiterated, whatever resonance they may have for Mr. Williams, and he has intruded philosophical asides—aspirations, as it were, to a wider significance—with an ill-concealed aggression. What is new is a fresh security of poetic resource—"Suddenly Last Summer" is often close to Lorca's theater poetry in the savage ceremony of images, all of color, with which it concludes—and a personal wrenching one has not previously encountered in Mr. Williams' drama.

The imagination lives by fables, and Mr. Williams offers that of "Suddenly Last Summer" as a "true story of our world and time." It is not unlike—this fable of the sybaritic poet, Sebastian Venable, going to the special horror of his doom with a fatal complicity—the serpentine parable Thomas Mann proposed in "Death in Venice," and indeed both works issue out of a terrible vision of erotic energy raveling in corruption all man's desperate strategies of order. "Death in Venice" more readily commands assent by its removal and austerity, where "Suddenly Last Summer," with its obsessive emphasis on exposure, often seems close to a scandalous private fantasy: that was quite my first impression of the play, as of a brilliant phosphorescence, bodiless. In this matter of assent, however, and ultimately of veracity, it is instructive to note that we do not vacillate between acceptance and rejection of Catherine Holly's "true story of our world and time," as we do with Brick's guilty recital in "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof," and Blanche duBois' reluctant tale of her suicidal husband. All the guile and vehemence of "Suddenly Last Summer" move toward establishing the possibility of belief, nor is the effort superfluous: at the final revelation, we are committed, irrevocably.

It is a commitment, however, to something beyond belief; it makes of belief indeed an irrelevance: at the very last, "Suddenly Last Summer" commands by its purity and demonic authority of vision. To anything like prose realities—and here I would include the conventional probabilities of character—Mr. Williams is all but indifferent. He is not interested in this Sebastian Venable's individual drama, as it were, but in his exemplary role; he ignores indeed what would otherwise dominate any question of this poet's private fate: the matter of the *worth* of his poetry. So also is Mr. Williams indifferent to what may seem superficially the "positive" impulse in "Suddenly Last Sum-

mer": its search after truth, and punishment of those who deny truth. In actuality, the dramatist is too sophisticated a psychologist to fail of awareness that what is interesting about moral deception is not the *fact* but the dictating motive and pressure. It may be remarked in passing that Mr. Williams has exploited to the limits of its capacity this theme of the iniquity of the truth not told, festering, and one would be grateful to see it recede in his work. Our holy sense of that inviolable intimacy of all deep and vulnerable life is ill served by so doctrinaire a stress on therapeutic exposure; indeed, such insistence seems to me itself palpably diseased. Exposure—to illustrate—is crucial to the patterns of "Oedipus Rex" and *The Scarlet Letter*, but attains meaning only within a larger context of suffering and knowledge. "Suddenly Last Summer" lacks this resonance, rich statement and amplification; Mr. Williams' fable is too easily extracted from its tissue of rather hastily sketched and insufficiently dramatized life. Which is to say it wants something of finality and aesthetic independence; it claims too readily that kind of theater existence its moral extremity and shock make possible.

To that fable, however, and again, one returns: scandalous in its sense of the "savage face" of God, its images of the tearing gulls, and its bleak rage at the vision of love as a ritual of egotism and manipulated illusion. Nowhere else has Mr. Williams embodied with such directness and intensity of symbolism the shape of the destructive element, in no other work made so undistracted a confession of belief in the artist's lyric vocation, his impotence in the flow of experience. Intimations of theology trouble this sphere, but its music is still an infernal harmony. In that we recognize the outward and visible sign of the world

of spirit Mr. Williams inhabits and *accepts*, and out of which he has fashioned an image of human destiny complete in its dreadful fate. We may dissent from the image, or even reject it: what we cannot deny is this power of shaping what the future may come to see as the myths of our culture. Ever terrible in their knowing and in their saying, these fables are yet a part of what Mr. Francis Fergusson calls "that multitude of divers strange and beautiful forms in which man is reflected in modern art."

Mr. Herbert Machiz gives "Suddenly Last Summer" a most artful gloss and texture of reality, without sacrificing to that the play's inwardness and power of fantasy. There is an equation between intention and effect in this production which Mr. Williams, as dramatist, has not always enjoyed, and to which the student of his theater will gratefully respond. The sultry menace of Mr. Robert Soule's decor is also admirably marked and delineated, as is Mr. Ned Rorem's music. The acting of both plays—the introductory dialogue, "Something Unspoken," is a sketch of charm and oddly persuasive pathos—offers many precisions and suave felicities, though of necessity Miss Anne Meacham and Miss Hortense Alden must carry the central weight. Miss Meacham, with her allure and baroque presence, builds finely to the revelation, then holds it by vocal incantation and concentrated force of remembrance: masterly work this, rich in personality and in art. Miss Alden must move obliquely, sorting her effects, gathering and distributing nuance in a role strewn with ambiguity. She does so with leisurely power and grace, with social wit, and a final terrible authority which lifts all to planes of hideous truth. (*At the York Playhouse.*)

RICHARD HAYES.

More Letters on "The Lay Professor"

Oscar W. Perlmutter's article "The Lay Professor" [Apr. 11] aroused a great deal of heated discussion. A selection of letters we received appeared in the issue of May 9. Another group of letters follows, together with Mr. Perlmutter's own remarks on the controversy. All points of view seem to have been heard from, and with the publication of these letters, therefore, we must regard the discussion of this issue in our pages as closed.

THE EDITORS.

Saint Louis, Mo.

TO THE EDITORS: Oscar W. Perlmutter, in "The Lay Professor" [Apr. 11], has done an excellent job of pointing out one of the basic problems in Catholic education. Unfortunately, I fear the administrative staffs of our universities, being human like the rest

of us, will not pull from this article the very important insights which Dr. Perlmutter has given them.

It is impossible to emphasize too strongly that in American society the religious who run the universities still conceive of the universities and colleges as appendages of the religious societies to which they belong. They seem in general unable to see the university as an entity with some kind of life of its own, in which the lay faculty must participate. One of the results of this is, as Dr. Perlmutter has so clearly shown, that the lay faculty are not coopted into the decision-making bodies of the university. I do not know, of course, the organization of all of our Catholic universities; that would be impossible. But those that I do know do not have lay faculty represented in a formal manner on the levels which actually do make the basic decisions. Further-

more, decision-making and problem-solving are kept so far removed from the lay faculty that it not infrequently happens that decisions are made or solutions arrived at in such a manner that the faculty are simply unaware of the basic problems involved. Hence, pronouncements concerning policy and decisions reached, even though of themselves most reasonable, arouse at times great resentment among the faculty, simply because they are unaware of the difficulties involved in the situation. Were they actually consulted, were there an operating communications process involving both the faculty and the religious making the decisions, this would be very much avoided.

Unfortunately also, the problem of scholarship in Catholic higher educational circles is not, as it seems, being honestly faced. It is impossible for persons trained in philosophy, theology and similar fields to be able to make decisions with regard to the qualifications of the staff which they hire. It is also impossible for them to make sensible decisions with regard to the content of the curriculum in fields in which they themselves are not trained. It unfortunately happens, however, that in too many of our Catholic institutions these decisions are made by the religious administering the college or university. They hire staff and plan curriculum with little reference to the lay members of the faculty who are trained in these fields. For some reason or other, because of their apparent personal involvement in the organization, they are unable to accept the fact that they cannot make all the decisions themselves.

Many of the problems which the universities' administrative staffs seem to think stem from lack of salary are actually stemming from this unwillingness to accept the lay faculty into the administrative process. Were they accepted they would be aware of the problems involved and they would find it much easier to accept the limitations which teaching in Catholic institutions of necessity imposes.

WILLIAM BATES.

Omaha, Neb.

TO THE EDITORS: It is a little surprising to read such an intemperate article as Mr. Perlmutter's "The Lay Professor" [Apr. 11] in your magazine. It is full of truths, half-truths, and generalized statements in a grand mixture. His own position in his college refutes most of what he says.

The treatment of lay teachers today is probably different in every Catholic college depending upon their

number, ability and temperament, so I do not think it safe to generalize. I work in a Catholic university where five of the seven Deans of the Colleges are laymen, and where each one of these people is expected to do his own job well. All participate in conferences pertaining to their own field; all are respected.

Administration has responsibilities distinct from classroom teaching in every school, and I do not see how classroom teachers could be burdened with it. But neither could function without the other, and teachers receive more protection than some of them realize. Many non-Catholic colleges are state or city controlled, and policies for administrators come from a government unit, from men who are appointees or vote-getters, but not educators such as the teaching orders are. Certainly the teachers do not have a voice in that type of administration.

Some of the ills of teachers that are mentioned are due to the status of education in this era, and have nothing to do with Catholic schools per se. Many schools need better equipment, more money for salaries, etc., but the author should be in a position to know the financial problems of private schools. Actually, people have always entered and left the teaching field (and other fields, too!).

In fairness to youth who plan to teach, and in fairness to the religious orders whose members work much longer hours than we laymen do, wouldn't you be good enough to publish another article that is on the constructive side?

(MRS.) MAURINE HAMILTON,
Dean of Women, Creighton University.

Cincinnati, Ohio.

TO THE EDITORS: It is unfortunate, I think, that the response to Oscar Perlmutter's article ("The Lay Professor," April 11, 1958) has been largely a consideration of whether he speaks of an existential fact or not. Whether the layman is respected in one, some, many, or most Catholic colleges affects the accuracy of Dr. Perlmutter's article, but it is a relatively fruitless discussion. It will not help the few or many who are slighted. For them the solution begins when their colleges recognize the slight as a slight, and nationwide statistics will not inform an individual college about itself.

The role of the lay professor requires some hard thinking on some complex problems—both theoretical and practical. A few theoretical questions come to my mind: Are religious orders in education in order to further intellectual perfection as such or to further intellectual life for the service of religion and morals? Does the specific religious order owning and governing the college have a special mission peculiar to itself and more specialized than the intellectual, vocational, and/or religious role of Catholic colleges in general? Does

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the lay professor serve the religious order in its teaching mission or is he free to conduct his own educational mission outside the canonical commitments of the religious order? Granting that the religious order owns the college and thereby necessarily must retain ultimate religious and financial management, what ought to be the relation between that management and the scholastic and academic administration? What is the essence of a Catholic college—a collection of thinkers who teach, where some are under the religious organization and all are under the financial organization of a Catholic institution?

I venture that much of the emotional response for or against Dr. Perlmutter's article has a rational background in implicit answers to some of these questions. It would be good to hear some explicit thought on these or better questions and to hear the thought of philosophers and Catholic theologians on them. Dr. Perlmutter's article deserves follow-up by serious consideration of both the theoretical and the practical questions which concern the lay professor's role.

JACK GRUENENFELDER,
Xavier University.

Baltimore, Md.

TO THE EDITORS: Let me add my cheers to others for Mr. Perlmutter's article, "The Lay Professor" [Apr. 11]. What he wrote needed to be written, it seems to me, because too many laymen are "sitting on their haunches, waiting for benevolent patronage." I was particularly engaged by the aptness of the order which Mr. Perlmutter gave his three fundamental rights—equal opportunity, professional conditions, and thirdly, adequate pay. That appears to me just about right.

Mr. Perlmutter might have given a broader dimension to his discussion. We hear much of the "age of the laity" and the "lay apostolate," but I see little concern for the practical means by which the aspirations in these phrases might be realized. If laymen and clergymen can not learn to cooperate (literally) on a university campus, I see little hope of such a development at other points of contact. On the university campus, the clergymen and laymen confront each other more nearly as social, intellectual and professional equals than in a parish. If a "community of interests" can not be developed on the campus, we may well wonder where, if ever, it will be developed.

Let me add one minor objection. I realize the currency of the phrases "lay professor" and "religious faculty," but I believe language can be tyrannical. A faculty should be a single community, as Mr. Perlmutter writes, regardless of the personal status of its members. This community is sundered by such phrases as "the religious faculty." I believe "religious members of the faculty" and "lay members of the faculty" to be

more accurate and appropriate, even though a little longer. I am not quibbling over words but rather over ideas as conveyed by words. This is a minor objection to an excellent article.

NICHOLAS VARGA.

REPLY FROM MR. PERLMUTTER

Chicago, Ill.

TO THE EDITORS: I wish to acknowledge the many warm and enthusiastic letters and notes of personal encouragement—including long distance telephone calls—as well as the inquiries and criticisms that so many professors and administrators, lay and religious, have seen fit to send me in regard to my article "The Lay Professor" [Apr. 11].

The factual aspect of the laymen's situation should be beyond dispute, except perhaps to some moderns, who, in the words of R. H. Tawney, insist upon quantifying the obvious, or who must put a thermometer into a flame in order to ascertain whether they have really been burnt. The literature on the subject, as well as the evidence, is hardly inconspicuous. Msgr. Ellis, to quote only one well-known source, wrote, "Catholic scholarship and learning, generally speaking, would be improved by giving to the laity more of a voice in the shaping of educational policy and in the active administration of the Catholic colleges and universities of the United States." Certainly, there are exceptions. I am one myself. I have always had some voice in the deliberative affairs of our college, even as an instructor. I was rapidly advanced to a chairmanship and was approved as vice president at a relatively young age. One reason I felt qualified to write on the subject of the layman was that no one could substantiate the charge that I had an ax to grind.

The depressed situation of the layman raises two crucial problems. The first is how to raise religious education (not only Catholic) to the highest level of scholarship and spirituality in the world. The second is how to place—one cannot say restore—the Catholic intellectual to a position of eminence, respect, and leadership in Catholic society, as well as in the larger, pluralistic framework of American society. At present he is without a constituency.

Catholic education will not rise above its present state of mediocrity until it discovers and develops and recruits intellectual talents in a grand manner, and then proceeds to use them with daring, imagination, and wisdom. I do not say the schools can not continue to exist under present arrangements, but they will not have the positive influence upon American culture or world affairs that is worthy of Catholic tradition. Any layman or religious who does not see this, but carps about petty details of household management, or indulges in chauvinistic sentiments about the identity or

sovereignty of this or that religious order is blind to the great movements of history, and the social and cultural developments that are taking place in our time. We are in the midst of a great struggle for the minds of men, a struggle that is far more intense than any of the sixteenth century. Insofar as the academic institutions of the free world are involved, the brunt of this struggle is being carried by the secular universities and colleges, and, at present, they are losing. But they are engaged! What about the great, and once great, religious centers of learning, Protestant, Jewish, or Catholic? They are practically dead. It is our task and duty to assist at their resurrection. In Catholic education, this will not be achieved without a wise use of the laity.

Mr. Walker's statement that "it is time we called a halt to the destructive criticism contained in sweeping anti-clerical attacks on Catholic education" is not only immature and uninformed, but in bad taste. In a free society, one does not turn criticism on and off at will. Some citizens criticize the culture of their city, as in

Chicago, and others do not, as in Paris, but in Moscow they are told when to criticize and when "to call a halt." The critique of Catholic education, although unorganized, has been largely the work of busy clerical hands. One need only cite Fathers Weigel, Ellis, Cavanaugh, Murray, and Reinert. Moreover, the criticism is rich in positive proposals, and much progress has already been made, but not nearly enough. We have developed a foul habit in American politics of labeling critics as subversive, and in religious affairs this is reflected by calling critics "anti-clerical" or "heretic."

There is a profounder awareness of the problems of the lay professor among clerics than among the laymen themselves, many of whom only mumble about small material details. It is my hope that the article and subsequent discussions will add ammunition to the arsenal of far-sighted religious and lay educators who are striving to speedily advance the cause of religious education.

OSCAR W. PERLMUTTER.

BOOKS

An Autonomous Individual with a Cultural Conscience

THOUGHTS IN THE WILDERNESS. By J. B. Priestley. Harper. \$4.

By MAX COSMAN

IN discussing *Thoughts in the Wilderness* (a compilation of articles in *The New Statesman* between 1953 and 1957, with a lecture for P.E.N. in the same period added as an epilogue), certain admissions have to be made at once. For all his long and successful career as man of letters, Mr. Priestley still has his obscuring vapors. He can be Philistinish, as in Tele-viewing ("Good luck to you, boys and girls! Thanks a lot, Mary, Peter, Sylvia, Derek!"); self-gratulatory, as in Publishers ("When, just over a year ago, I broached this subject on television, most publishers were not even mildly interested."); and annoyingly inconclusive, as in Mass Communications (in which an account of B.B.C. programs that failed to please him might have brought to light some that would not).

These limitations granted, Mr. Priestley's operative quality is that he is an avid human being with a talent for expressing what the aver-

age cultured individual thinks about our social scene. Nothing is alien to Mr. Priestley. The far intrigues him as well as the near. Are international conferences up for discussion? He can point out, as his comparable citizen will, that they are maneuverings for power geared to respective ideological and national propagandas. Is the home front being considered, say the complex represented by journalism, film, radio, and T.V.? How he catches sensitive Everyman's ever-growing alarm at the manipulations in the fields involved! How apt, as if he never missed the inner fears, are his expressions of that alarm—"the red-pulp view of life," "nursing-home view of entertainment," "the half-wit's loudspeaker," "professional cynicism and commercial cunning." Even when he deals with something more personal, the status of the writer today, how precisely he puts his finger on what the commonality of his fellow-workers would call the right spots. "The writer as superior technician will survive. But the author in his older and larger capacities, as a unique individual and yet a truly representative figure of his time, may not survive."

Or: "Our society, already looking inhuman in some of its aspects, cannot be restored to a full humanity by a small artificial anti-popular culture any more than it can by the mechanical antics of mass amusement."

In the presence of such communal though individuated thinking, condemning as it does the banal or cheap on the one hand and the intellectually apart or smug on the other, one should not have to answer a question like Is he anti-American? But the question does come up. The answer is No—at least no more so than many of us are necessarily anti-British just because, peeved for good enough reason no doubt, we sound off too. The point is that as a functioning writer who puts into print a multitude of reactions, Mr. Priestley has utterances on record for which he can be charged, and, by the same token, still others to justify his discharge. Thus, in the pyrotechnical chapter, "A Note on Billy Graham," he makes, among many, this crack: "Our sins are being denounced in an American accent." If one is overly touchy, here is ground for a charge of anti-Americanism: a

casual fact has been turned into an inherent indictment. (*Journey down a Rainbow* has a slew of these.)

But listen to Mr. Priestley in still another chapter, "Who is Anti-American?" "If I were to be kicked out of this country," he writes, and he means England here, "I should probably go to America, if it would have me. I have now an affection for it, and that is why I do not hesitate to criticise it. . . . I do it because I believe the *Admass* system (our money-idol-ed economic-social-cultural system) to be unworthy of the place, the people, and the astonishing revolutionary idea, unique in history, they represent. This is a nation that came out of a noble dream. If it is anti-American to remember that dream, which so many pro-Americans seem to forget, then I am indeed anti-American."

He is not, of course. What he is, however, is very important, especially today as the world stratifies more and more into what he calls Bossmen and Massmen. Fundamentally, like the late George Orwell, he is an autonomous individual, though one with a cultural rather than social conscience. Desperately aware of values that should not be discarded and of falsities which ought not to be lifted to the high places, he speaks out manfully if polemically. We can do with more like him.

Literary Russia

RUSSIAN FICTION AND SOVIET IDEOLOGY. By Ernest J. Simmons. Columbia University Press. \$4.75.

By FRANCIS B. RANDALL

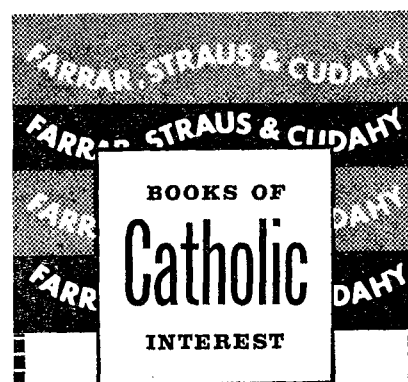
COMMUNISM is bad for literature, but many books worth reading emerge even from Red Russia. Post-Revolutionary Russian literature is much less read in the West than the classics of the Nineteenth Century. Russian poetry remains largely inaccessible behind the language barrier. The novel, the most translatable of the forms of literature, is also the most susceptible to Communist pressure, and

so is likely to encounter the most hostility abroad. Save for *The Quiet Don*, even the best Russian novels are simply not so good as they used to be, and the chief malefactor is clearly the Party.

Consequently the reader and the teacher of modern Russian literature arrive at an abnormal balance between literature as enjoyment of pure art and literature as documents for social research. To read Proust and Gide chiefly for the light they shed on the social structure of the Third French Republic would be a crime against the mind. But with Russia such a procedure becomes morally necessary, for we must know about Russian society if we are to survive, and no non-literary source allowed across the Iron Curtain tells us so much—and then most of the "literature" would not repay a formal analysis anyway! The only danger is that when a genuine pearl does come out of Russia it gets dumped into the I.B.M. machine and ground up with the rest. Witness the fate of *Not by Bread Alone*, which is surely no worse than a second-rate novel, though one would hardly guess it from the reviews.

In his latest book Professor Simmons, Columbia's senior authority on Russian literature, discusses both the art and the political information to be derived from reading the three best Russian novelists who have written through most of the Communist period, Konstantin Fedin, Leonid Leonov, and Mikhail Sholokhov. Each of the three essays is constructed out of a series of précis of the writer's major books, connected by accounts of the reception of each book by the public and the Party, the author's life in or near the Party, the Party's pressures on the author, and how it all eventuated in the next book.

Some of the précis are quite long—the one on *The Quiet Don* goes on for forty pages—and such an emphasis on plot does not always entice a newcomer to read a book. Mr. Simmons frequently asserts the power of the situation in one passage or the beauty of the language in another, but the quotations, mostly snatches of dialogue, are



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rarely extensive enough or stirringly enough translated to demonstrate the points. Some of the purely literary judgments are arguable; Professor Simmons criticizes Sholokhov for dwelling on death agonies and corpses in *The Quiet Don*. But there is even more of that in the *Iliad*, which is rarely held to account for it; war books should have war in them.

Mr. Simmons shows how Party criticisms of these novelists and their heroes illuminate Communist ideals at various periods; the hero as Revolutionary Warrior, the hero as Constructor of Socialism, the hero as New Soviet Man. He shows how these genuinely if not uncritically pro-Communist writers tried hard to portray properly Communist heroes in properly Communist situations without making them wooden—and how they often succeeded. (The most frequent device for “humanizing” a Communist hero is to have him take a few mistresses.) But Mr. Simmons indicates the tension within all three writers between their Communist faith and their individualistic inclinations. In fact, he finds the categories, “heroic” and “collective,” fundamentally incompatible—in which case the enterprise of a Communist literature is doomed from the start. This explains why he sees Davidov, the Communist who collectivizes the village in Sholokhov’s *Virgin Soil Upturned*, as very interesting but “no great character,”

while Gregor Melekhov, ex-White officer, ex-bandit, who has lost everything in the cycle of War and Revolution, who rides home to certain death at the hands of the Reds on the banks of the quiet Don, is “unforgettable.”

Mr. Simmon’s book certainly serves its avowed function as an introduction to Fedin, Leonov, and Sholokhov. But for an even better introduction, read what is perhaps the greatest novel of the twentieth century, Sholokhov’s own *The Quiet Don*.

The Ambiguous Man

THE GUIDE. By R. K. Narayan. Viking. \$3.50.

By SALLY APPLETON

MR. NARAYAN’S novel is about the exploits of Raju in and near the imaginary Indian town of Malgudi as Raju makes first one kind of life for himself and then another, each built on a dream of self-importance. The story is told through flashbacks arranged in the order Raju remembers them.

It begins with Raju as a holy man sitting in an ancient shrine near the river outside of Malgudi. It would be unjust to say he is “disguised” as a holy man, for although Raju has chosen this role to avoid being recognized after his release from jail, he lives his role much as one lives a habit, and it grows to seem natural to him that he should speak wisely to the people and be believed. But sometimes he is impatient and burdened by the illusion he creates, and he is a practical man. He stores away the surplus of food offerings brought by the people, against the time they will bring him no more. He does not hesitate to give his counsel in a way least bothersome to himself.

While his habit of “holiness” deepens, Raju thinks back to his early life, his father’s railroad station store, which, when his father died, Raju changed to a profitable book business, back to his rise in fame as “Railroad Raju,” tourist

guide, and back to Rosie the dancer wife of an oblivious antiquarian who was one of Raju’s clients. After Rosie’s husband left her in disgust, Raju brought Rosie home with him and invested his energies and money into making her a famous dancer, playing the role of impresario and lover, until he was sent to jail for forging her signature. Raju, like a stoic or a clown, meets this downfall showing no effects from pain.

But being a holy man has consequences different from those of being a bookseller, guide, or impresario. With a kind of holy gullibility, the people believe in Raju in a way he can not control. Through a mistake, he is thought to have pledged himself to make a perpetual fast to end the country’s drought, and to avoid the situation, he reveals his past to Velan, his closest disciple. But Velan cannot relate the humanity of Raju to his own humanity, and instead of exposing him, he swears to guard the confession in his heart forever. Raju is trapped. For the first time the author makes his character act sincerely, and, as a consequence, Raju offers himself to pay and fast to the death.

For the author, the problem caused by this change equals the dilemma of Raju. Raju’s sudden commitment violates the flashing wit shown in the picaresque story which from the start has clearly avoided commitment. The author must decide whether or not holiness will work, must deal with a change in human character.

It seems to me here the author abandons his reader to choose arbitrarily whether or not, as Raju sinks into the muddy river bed, he is dying; whether or not, as the water rises around Raju’s knees, it rises because “it’s raining in the hills” or because Raju himself is sagging into it. The skill and control is dropped, so that we do not know whether Raju is supposed to be a saint and amaze us, whether his spirit mocks the idea of sanctity, or whether or not we are justified in finding the end to be as ambiguous as we do.

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John Brown's Life

THUNDER AT HARPER'S FERRY. By Allan Keller. Prentice-Hall. \$4.95.

By JOHN COUNOS

IT WOULD BE difficult, if not impossible, to add anything new on John Brown after Oswald Garrison Villard's exhaustive study published in 1910. In any case, such could not have been the intention of Mr. Keller, a journalist of long standing, in writing this book. Rather, it seems, he has sought to utilize the dramatic climax of John Brown's life and create out of the main available facts a narrative comparable in effect to that produced by a kinematic or television sequence of that epic story. "Create," perhaps, is the wrong word; for a mere recital of facts as culled from the record is so dramatic in the essence as to preclude any necessity for embellishment. Not even the frankly journalese prose of Mr. Keller can take from the stark dignity of the personal tragedy of John Brown, which may be deemed the fitting prelude to the Civil War. History can on occasion be, and in this instance was, the Master Dramatist who provided a singularly appropriate Prologue, and with it a warning, which men blinded by passions could not or would not see. John Brown himself was the Chorus, with that singular prescience with which Greek Choruses were so often provided. This was

clearly revealed in his final message, handed to the jailer immediately before the execution. It was an accurate prophecy: "I John Brown am now quite certain that the crimes of this guilty land: will never be purged away; but with Blood. I had as I now think: vainly flattered myself that without very much bloodshed it might be done."

Harper's Ferry in itself was a small affair to what was yet to come—a mere cloud like a man's hand—a prelude to the heaven that "was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain." There was that little band of eighteen persons, grim Sancho Panzas following a very grim Don Quixote, drawn not by any promise of hypothetical isles but by the prospect of that "ultimate isle" which is death itself. The South did not behave nobly, did not exercise that spirit of chivalry of which it was unduly proud. The pages of this book clearly reveal the inhuman attitudes of the townspeople, who acted like beasts towards any of Brown's little party who happened to fall into their hands. The military, however, acted decently and protected Brown, with a grudging admiration of his courage and powers of endurance, once his ammunition ran out and he and his surviving men could no longer defend themselves.

The key to Brown's character and his object in making his raid has been shown in the pre-execution message already cited. This raises an aspect of John Brown too little dwelt upon: his eloquence, his extraordinary command of words. Listen to his words spoken to the Court after the sentence of death had been passed: "This Court acknowledged too, as I suppose, the validity of the law of God. I see a book kissed here which I suppose to be the Bible, or at least the New Testament. That teaches me that all things 'whatsoever I mean men should do to me I should do even so to them.' I endeavored to act up to those instructions. I say I am yet too young to understand that God is any respecter of persons. I believe that to have interfered as I have done, in behalf of His despised poor, was no wrong, but right. Now,

if it is deemed that I should forfeit my life for the furtherance of the ends of justice, and mingle my blood with the blood of my children, and with the blood of the millions in this slave country whose rights are disregarded by wicked, cruel, and unjust enactments, I submit. So let it be done."

REVIEWERS

Max Cosman is a frequent contributor to many critical and scholarly journals.

Frank Randall, a member of the faculty of Amherst College, has specialized in Russian political and cultural affairs.

Sally Appleton, who has previously contributed poetry to *The Commonwealth*, is an instructor in English literature.

John Cournos, a well-known critic and anthologist, is a specialist in Americana.



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